

Strategies to Increase Biking

in a diverse Minneapolis Community



MAY 2013

Minneapolis Health Department



Introduction

Minneapolis is nationally recognized as one of North America's great bicycle cities. Every day, thousands of residents, commuters and visitors take to the streets, pedaling their way to work, to school, to visit friends and family, to socialize and do business around town. In the process, they improve their own health and well-being, decrease roadway congestion, and reduce their contribution to air pollution and greenhouse gases.

The City of Minneapolis, community organizations, and resident advocates strive to make it a daily reality that all bicyclists and pedestrians enjoy a welcoming environment and are able to ride and walk safely, efficiently, and conveniently year-round. The following organizations and community leaders have been involved in orchestrating a significant shift from motorized vehicle travel to biking and walking: City of Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak and the Minneapolis City Council, the Minneapolis Departments of Health and Public Works; Bike Walk Twin Cities (a program of the nonprofit Transit for Livable Communities focused on promoting multi-modal transportation), Nice Ride Minnesota bike sharing program, Minneapolis Public Schools, and Minneapolis Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees, among many others. Together, these entities work on three main goals:

1. Increase the biking and pedestrian infrastructure.
2. Make biking and walking resources more available and affordable.
3. Create a culture where biking and walking are the norm.

As a result of these efforts, Minneapolis has 167 miles of bikeways and 1,800 miles of sidewalks; Minnesota's first bike sharing system; one of the nation's most innovative Safe Routes to School programs; and social norms that promote biking and walking. In 2009, the City of Minneapolis adopted a Pedestrian Master Plan outlining over 70 strategies to support walking for all types of pedestrians, and in 2011 adopted a comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan which set an ambitious 30-year vision to improve bicycling in the city. These plans create a common vision for biking and walking; present a framework for prioritizing infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects, and suggest policy language, goals, objectives, and benchmarks related to biking and walking.

To assess progress made in active transportation, Minneapolis Public Works has partnered with Bike Walk Twin Cities and more than 100 volunteers since 2007 to count bicycling and walking activity at locations around the city. To date, more than 400 locations have been counted. From 2010 to 2011 the number of bicyclists in Minneapolis increased 25 percent, and from 2007 to 2011 the number of bicyclists increased 47 percent. Minneapolis is on track to meet its sustainability goal of increasing bicycling 60 percent between 2007 to 2014. The pedestrian counts conducted citywide from 2007 to 2010 show an 18 percent increase in pedestrian volumes. According to the 2010 Hennepin County SHAPE survey, 32 percent of residents report biking to a destination at least one day a week when the weather is good.

Despite these significant achievements, not everyone in the city has equal opportunity to choose biking and walking as their modes of transportation. North Minneapolis, in particular, lacks many of the biking and walking resources that residents in other parts of the city enjoy and, as a result, has lower rates of biking and walking compared to other communities across Minneapolis.

About Communities Putting Prevention to Work

In 2010, the Minnesota Department of Health received Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) funding to partner with the City of Minneapolis and Olmsted County to implement obesity prevention strategies. The funding in Minneapolis was used to:

- Increase access to and opportunities for physical activity within communities.
- Improve affordability of and access to nutritious foods.
- Increase awareness of the positive changes that are taking place in Minneapolis and need for collective action to create healthy communities.

The CPPW framework called for a comprehensive approach to increasing healthy behaviors through:

- Media campaigns.
- Access to healthy food and physical activity.
- Promotion and point-of-decision prompts to encourage healthy behaviors.
- Price support.
- Social support and services.



About North Minneapolis

North Minneapolis (the North Side) is a 13-neighborhood area that makes up the northwest quadrant of Minneapolis. This community is home to approximately 59,970 of the city’s most diverse and low-income residents. Compared to the rest of the city, the North Side is significantly less densely-populated than the city as a whole.

People of color account for more than 70 percent of the community. Almost half of the residents of the North Side are African American (46 percent). Residents with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level range from 43% in one north Minneapolis planning district to 66 percent in another (compared to 39 percent of the city as a whole). As shown in Table 1, there are significant disparities in healthy behaviors and health status between north Minneapolis residents compared to residents of the city overall.

Table 1: Self-reported health status among north Minneapolis residents and Minneapolis residents

Indicators of health status	North Minneapolis	Minneapolis
Obesity	30%	19%
Hypertension	22%	8%
Diabetes	15%	5%
Meets Healthy People 2010 Guidelines for Physical Activity	28%	38%

Though residents in this area have less access to personal vehicles than other Minneapolis residents (22 percent of North Side residents have no personal vehicle available), bicycling rates are low. According to annual bicycle count data, some neighborhoods on Minneapolis’ North Side have the lowest observed bicycle volumes in the city. For example, only nine bicyclists were counted over a two-hour period at a North Side location compared to 2,627 cyclists in the highest count location near the University of Minnesota.

To increase biking and walking among north Minneapolis residents and improve health, the Minneapolis Health Department and its partners developed a comprehensive, multi-strategy approach that included:

- Expanding Nice Ride, a bike share system.
- Installing 243 bike and pedestrian wayfinding signs.
- Opening the Venture North Bike Walk & Coffee.
- Implementing the Bike.Walk.MOVE campaign to promote biking and walking in north Minneapolis.

The health department and its partners implemented these strategies over two years (March 2010 to March 2012) with a Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

This document describes the process of implementing each of these projects, results, and lessons learned.

1 Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department. SHAPE 2010 Adult Data Book, Survey of the Health of All the Population and the Environment, Minneapolis, Minnesota, March 2011.



NICE RIDE

Nice Ride Minnesota

Background

The use of active transportation (biking or walking to destinations) is associated with better fitness, reduced risk for cardiovascular disease and lower rates of obesity and diabetes. Consequently, public health advocates have embraced public bike sharing as a way to increase physical activity and improve health. A bicycle sharing system is a service in which bicycles are available for community shared use. The central concept of these systems is to provide access to bicycles for short-distance trips as an alternative to motorized vehicles or public transportation. Riders typically check out a bike from one kiosk and check it back into a kiosk at their destination.

In 2010, Nice Ride, a local non-profit organization, unveiled Minnesota's first bike sharing network to Minneapolis with 65 kiosks and 700 bikes. The network was largely concentrated in densely populated areas with many destinations such as downtown Minneapolis, the area around the University of Minnesota and Uptown, a vibrant area of the city that includes lakes with biking trails, restaurants and stores. To use the system, subscribers pay a small fee to join the network for 24 hours, one month or one year. With a subscription, they can use the bikes for short trips (up to 30 minutes) for no additional fee. All subscriptions require a credit card.

The original Nice Ride network did not include any kiosks in north Minneapolis because of the area's lower density of housing, retail, entertainment, or other destinations. After concerns and complaints from some North Side residents and elected officials, Nice Ride added three kiosks (September 2010) on the perimeter of the North Side near the downtown core.

As part of its comprehensive effort to increase active transportation in north Minneapolis, the health department funded Nice Ride to develop a more complete bike share network for north Minneapolis.

Project description

Expanding the Nice Ride network to north Minneapolis included:

- Community engagement to design a North Side network.
- Installing kiosks.
- Promotion and community outreach to encourage usage.

Community engagement

To gather community input about Nice Ride and bike sharing in north Minneapolis, Nice Ride contracted with a community-based planning firm to lead a community engagement process that included two community meetings, interviews with elected officials, and a series of focus groups with key stakeholders.

Staff from the health department and Nice Ride held an initial community meeting in October 2010 to introduce Nice Ride and explain the expansion process. Next, the planning firm conducted six focus groups with local business owners and employees, representatives from North Side nonprofit institutions, customers of social service and health care institutions, North Side bicycle advocates, residents of low-income housing, and students at a vocational training institution. A business association, an African American bicycle advocacy group, and social service organizations assisted with recruiting participants who received a \$25 gift card, a meal, and a Nice Ride T-shirt as compensation for their participation.

In each focus group, the facilitators described Nice Ride and sought feedback on ways that Nice Ride would be used by north Minneapolis residents, potential locations for kiosks, potential barriers to system usage, and possible solutions. Focus group participants generally viewed Nice Ride positively. All focus group participants offered suggestions for

kiosk locations and many suggestions overlapped across focus groups. They thought Nice Ride would be convenient for errands and other short trips and some thought the cost of an annual subscription (\$60) was reasonable. However, many thought that the credit card requirement would exclude some people from participating. Participants also identified potential challenges for Nice Ride: the design of Nice Ride bikes (e.g., not made to haul much cargo or bring children along), perceptions of biking as an indication of “lack of success,” and perceptions of Nice Ride as something “that only professional business people use.”

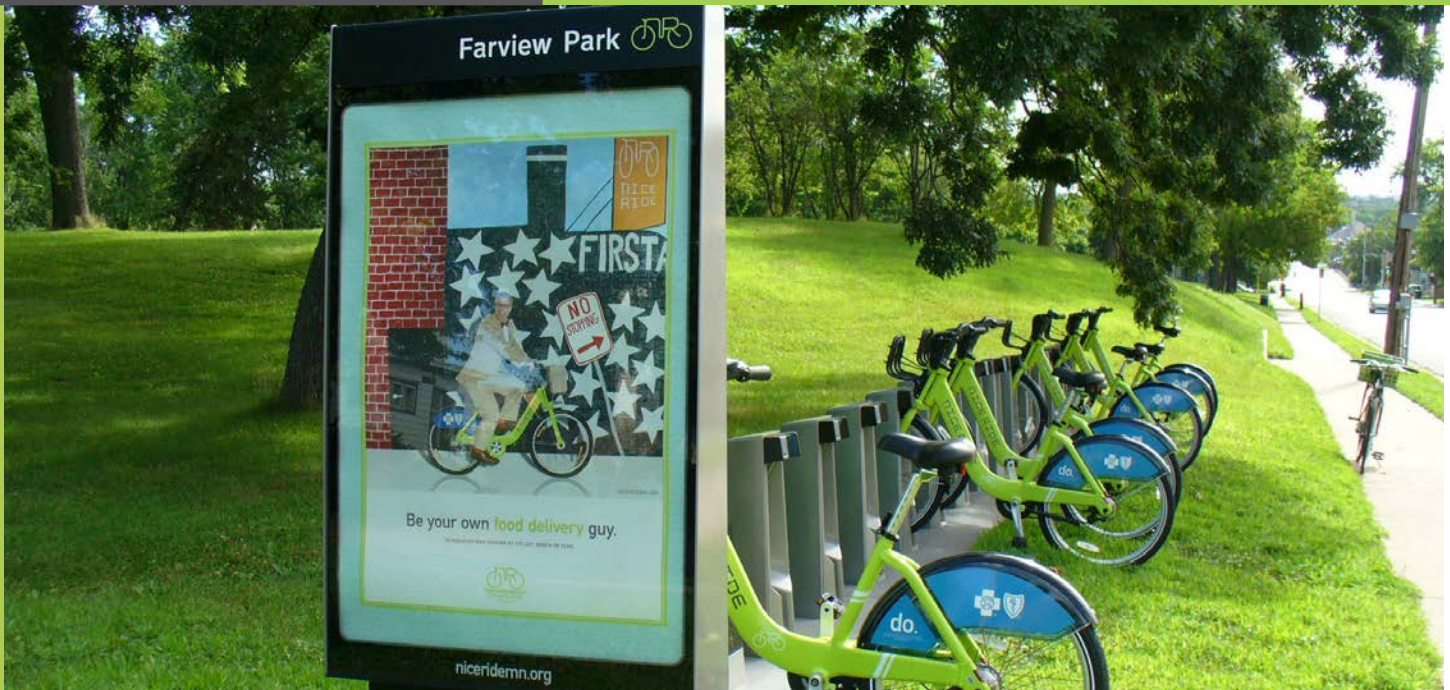
At a second community meeting, Nice Ride staff shared the focus group findings, discussed potential station locations, answered questions, and continued to take feedback on the North Side expansion.

Kiosk installation

Through the community engagement process, people identified more kiosk locations than the six that the CPPW budget could accommodate. Nice Ride garnered additional resources for two additional kiosks. Staff from the health department and Nice Ride selected eight locations that met the following criteria:

- Identified by community members and/or stakeholders in the community engagement process.
- Located in an area with sufficient commercial or residential density and near popular destinations.
- Maintained the integrity of the Nice Ride network by not leaving major gaps between stations or clumping them too closely together.

In April, 2011, Nice Ride installed eight additional kiosks, resulting in a network of 11 kiosks in north Minneapolis. Nice Ride installed kiosks at or near most of the locations suggested during the community engagement process.



Promotion and community outreach

The health department's budget for the bike sharing expansion paid for the initial community engagement and kiosk installation, but did not provide Nice Ride with financial support for marketing and outreach. Nice Ride, with its own limited budget, conducted the following activities to introduce bike sharing to the community and encourage its use:

- Discounted membership: To attract new users, Nice Ride provided coupons offering a \$40 (instead of \$60) annual subscription.
- Ambassador: Nice Ride hired a recognized bike advocate in north Minneapolis to serve as an ambassador for the system. His roles were to promote Nice Ride and increase its presence in the community by riding Nice Ride bikes in North Side neighborhoods, talking with friends and neighbors about the program, and distributing the coupons for free subscriptions.

- **Community Outreach:** Nice Ride’s community organizer, who was hired to conduct outreach citywide, attempted to develop some partnerships with social service agencies and other organizations to distribute reduced-rate subscription vouchers to their clients. Very few subscriptions resulted from these outreach efforts because the community organizer’s outreach efforts were limited in north Minneapolis and staff at most agencies did not have time to plan events or integrate Nice Ride into its existing services.
- **Events and Media Outreach:** Nice Ride had planned a media blitz and some community events for early June to launch the North Side expansion; however, on May 22, 2011, a tornado struck north Minneapolis causing extensive damage and community upheaval. In August, after the community had somewhat recovered, Nice Ride tried to gain media attention with a ride by the mayor of Minneapolis, but no media channel picked up the story. The health department integrated Nice Ride messages into its Bike.Walk.MOVE campaign (described on page 22) and promoted Nice Ride on its website, maps and brochures. Throughout the summer, the health department and Nice Ride staff observed reluctance among north Minneapolis residents to use the new bike share system because of their unfamiliarity and confusion with the rental process. To help people feel more comfortable with the system, Nice Ride staff provided some free demonstrations and one-on-one instruction.

Outcomes

To evaluate the impact of the Nice Ride usage expansion in north Minneapolis, Nice Ride and health department staff tracked new subscriptions among Near North residents and trips to and from North Side kiosks between April and November 2011.

Subscriptions: Nice Ride has two types of subscribers – “annual subscribers” who purchase an annual subscription from the Nice Ride website, and “casual subscribers” who purchase a 24-hour subscription at kiosks. Subscriber data is collected by a third-party system administrator and then shared with Nice Ride. Data is collected from annual subscribers when they purchase their subscription on the Nice Ride website: credit card information, gender, birth date, address, and subscription price. Credit card information and zip codes are collected from casual subscribers at kiosks when they purchase their subscriptions.

In 2011, 332 north Minneapolis residents obtained Nice Ride subscriptions. Most residents (208) obtained casual subscriptions while 124 bought annual subscriptions. The majority of annual subscribers (88 percent) took advantage of the \$40 discounted rate vouchers.

North Minneapolis subscribers took a total of 2,741 trips throughout the whole network during the 2011 season, with annual subscribers taking an average of 8.2 trips each. On average, subscribers biked for 22.2 minutes. Assuming the time was spent biking at a moderate pace, the average trip provided the rider with more than two-thirds of daily physical activity levels recommended in the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.



Costs for Nice Ride Expansion

\$27,410: Community meeting and focus group expenses

\$1,090: Kiosk site planning

\$200,000 (\$43,000 per kiosk): CPPW funds paid for six of the eight kiosks

\$15,126: Salary/fringe for health department staff to work on this project (.1 FTE)

Total: \$243,626

Trips to or from north Minneapolis kiosks: Nice Ride collects the following data every time a bike is checked out of a kiosk – trip start terminal, end terminal, trip duration, cost, customer ZIP code (casual subscriber only), and a unique ID associated with the customer credit card (casual subscriber only). Data is transmitted wirelessly from kiosks to a third-party data manager who shares data files with Nice Ride. Health department staff analyzed the data to determine the total number of trips in the system; number of trips to or from each Near North kiosk; number of trips by subscribers with north Minneapolis zip codes; and percent of trips to or from Near North kiosks that were taken by north Minneapolis residents.

Between April-November 2011, 7,241 trips were taken to or from one of the 11 North Side kiosks. These trips accounted for 3.3 percent of the 217,530 bike trips that were made in the entire Nice Ride bike system. The number of trips to or from north Minneapolis kiosks peaked in July 2011 at 1,399 trips. The majority of trips to North Side kiosks were taken by non-North Side residents. In fact, less than 25 percent of trips to and from North Side kiosks were taken by North Side subscribers, suggesting that people were riding to and from north Minneapolis from downtown and other parts of the city. Usage was highest at a kiosk located near a commuter parking lot on the northern edge of downtown, suggesting that people parked their vehicles in the lot and used the bikes to ride to their downtown destination.

Across the entire city, the 332 north Minneapolis subscribers made 2,741 trips, 88 percent of which were made by annual subscribers. North Minneapolis subscribers were more likely to complete internal-to-external or external-to-internal trips (e.g., begin their trip in Near North and end their trip outside Near North) than internal-to-internal trips (e.g. begin and end their trip in Near North).

Summary

North Minneapolis kiosk usage was much lower than usage of other kiosks within the system and North Side residents accounted for a small percentage of Nice Ride subscribers during the 2011 season. The low rates of usage and subscriptions could be attributed to many factors:

- North Minneapolis has a lower density of people and destinations compared to the rest of the network.
- Nice Ride staff and the ambassador heard anecdotally that the subscription cost (\$60 or \$40 with the discount voucher) was too expensive. The fact that only two vouchers for free subscriptions were redeemed suggests that factors other than a cost barrier (e.g., lack of interest or fear of riding) were stronger impediments to using Nice Ride.
- The tornado and the limited budget for promotion and marketing resulted in modest and insufficient community outreach activities. Residents' reluctance to try the system indicates that more targeted outreach and education is needed to help alleviate this as a barrier to use.
- Nice Ride's system requires a credit card, making it inaccessible to "unbanked" residents.

The health department and Nice Ride succeeded in improving access to biking on the North Side through the installation of the bike sharing kiosks in this community. Considering that many residents report not having access to a working bike (page 25), this was a significant contribution to the biking environment in north Minneapolis. Bicycle use and physical activity are lower in north Minneapolis than the city overall and it is likely to take time for Nice Ride use and active transportation, in general, to become a social norm and widespread behavior in this community. As of spring 2013, the kiosks remain in

north Minneapolis and Nice Ride remains committed to continue experimenting with various customer marketing and outreach strategies.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Wayfinding Signs

Background

The City of Minneapolis' Bicycle Master Plan and the Pedestrian Master Plan both identify standardized wayfinding signage as a high priority strategy for increasing active transportation. Signage contributes to an overall environment of biking and walking by reminding commuters about alternatives to motorized transportation and showing them how to access existing biking and walking infrastructure such as bike lanes, trails and pedestrian walkways.

Because the City of Minneapolis had recently added biking lanes on some North Side streets, the health department included the installation of wayfinding signage in its CPPW grant as a component of its comprehensive approach to increasing biking and walking in north Minneapolis.

Project description

To implement the signage strategy, the health department partnered with Minneapolis Public Works to:

- Develop signage plans.
- Write and adopt design guidelines for pedestrian signs.
- Install pedestrian and bicycle signs across the city.

Signage plans

To identify the appropriate locations for each sign, Public Works staff conducted an assessment of existing bike and pedestrian signage and noted significant gaps, especially in north Minneapolis and other low-income neighborhoods. From this assessment, Public Works staff identified 10 neighborhoods where signage was most needed. Two of these neighborhoods—Near North and Webber-Camden—are located in north Minneapolis. Public Works staff compiled diagrams showing key intersections and locations where either bicycle or pedestrian signage would be most useful. Public Works staff also conducted informal interviews and five focus groups with community residents (including avid bicyclists) and neighborhood organizations to learn about



Timeline

Summer 2010: Five focus groups held to gather input on signage locations

December 2010: Signage plans completed for all 10 neighborhoods

Winter 2011: Public Works makes 406 signs. Public Works develops and officially adopts Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage Guidelines.

Late summer 2011: Signs are installed in all neighborhoods

the most frequently traveled routes and destinations and to gather opinions on the best locations for signage. Based on community input, Public Works staff developed signage placement plans for each of the 10 neighborhoods. Appendix 1 shows a neighborhood plan.

Development and adoption of Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage Guidelines

In the process of developing the signs, Public Works staff realized it needed pedestrian signage guidelines to ensure that pedestrian signs were installed according to City policy. The guidelines are intended to create a uniform design for signs and a standard for installing them at locations where they provide the most value. The guidelines indicate the size and type of signs to use, appropriate locations, and additional wayfinding applications to use in high-pedestrian activity areas. Public Works staff developed the Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage Guidelines during the winter of 2011. In February 2011, Public Works formally adopted the guidelines, which will be used to inform the future design and placement of all pedestrian signs within the city.

Sign installation

During the winter of 2011, Public Works made three types of signs:

1. Bicycle destination signs that include a bicycle symbol, arrow, destination, and distance on a green background. These signs are posted at bicycle route intersections to aid cyclists' decisions about route selections.
2. Modified street name signs that include a bicycle symbol on an existing street name sign. These signs tell people where to find bike routes and alert drivers crossing or turning onto these routes that cyclists may be present.

3. Pedestrian signs that indicate safe walking connections to help people navigate complicated crossings over bridges and across some streets.

Public Works staff had planned to install the signs in June 2011; however, the tornado delayed installation plans. In late summer of 2011, Public Works installed 406 signs across the city; 60 percent of the signs (243) were installed in north Minneapolis.

Outcomes

Indicators of the impact of the wayfinding signs come from the Bike.Walk.MOVE survey (described on page 25). Survey findings indicate that residents in north Minneapolis became aware of the bike and pedestrian signs. In the baseline survey (before sign installation) 48 percent of respondents reported seeing signs that marked biking and walking routes in their neighborhood. In the follow-up survey (after sign installation), 75 percent reported seeing these types of signs; however, the same survey showed no difference in biking behavior, indicating that signs can serve as a visible reminder of biking routes but alone, are not sufficient to affect behavior.



Costs for Wayfinding Signs

\$22,461: Public Works staff to make signs

\$8,321: Sign materials

\$15,126: Salary/fringe for health department staff (.1 FTE)

Total: \$45,908



Summary

Though signage is a critical component of a comprehensive approach to increasing active transportation, it alone is not sufficient to affect behavior. As the impact of other strategies evolves (Nice Ride expansion, increased availability of bikes through Nice Ride and Venture North), the signs will serve an important function in providing visual cues that direct people to dedicated biking facilities.

Bike Walk Center

Background

Prior to 2010, there were no bicycle shops in north Minneapolis, despite many stores located in other parts of the city. North Side residents could not purchase a bike, obtain parts, or access repair services conveniently and affordably in their community. Though some entities had explored opening shops in north Minneapolis, they had difficulty securing start-up funds because of the perception that businesses cannot thrive in this predominantly low-income community. To address this major gap in north Minneapolis' biking and walking infrastructure and to contribute to an environment that supports active living, the health department dedicated a portion of its CPPW funds to provide start-up funds for a bike/walk community center. The goals of the center were to create a physical location where people could access new and used bikes, get bikes repaired, and learn the skills necessary to make active transportation part of their daily lives.

Project Description

The health department and its partners pursued the bike/walk community center in three phases:

- Identify a partner for the bike/walk community center.
- Develop the center and its components.
- Open and operate the center.

Identifying a partner for the bike/walk community center

Upon receiving the CPPW grant to develop the bike/walk center, the health department immediately sought business venture expertise from the Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED). It conducted a comprehensive Retail Market Profile that provided analysis on the capacity of north Minneapolis to support a bicycle/pedestrian retail business, recommendations for the center's location and the types of customers to target, and estimates of the annual sales needed to resemble the typical market sales of similar businesses. With CPED, the health department convened community partners and local bike shops to conceptualize the center and recruit a business partner. Together, these entities spent approximately four months defining the components of the center and pursuing a potential partnership with a national bicycle supplier to operate the center. After making significant progress during this planning phase, the project was delayed after the national partner declined to participate in a mandatory Request for Proposals (RFP) process required by City of Minneapolis for contracts exceeding \$50,000.

In September 2010, the health department issued an RFP to identify a partner that could use the CPPW funds (up to \$350,000) as start-up money for the center and then operate a self-sustaining non-profit business after one year. The RFP asked respondents to pick a location and develop a business plan that included the following components: programming, bike and pedestrian retail sales, bike repair and maintenance services, youth employment opportunities; and other revenue generating components. Applicants were also required to provide a five-year projection of expenses, revenue and profit. Staff from the health department and CPED held a pre-proposal conference to describe the RFP and



Pre-renovation

answer questions from potential applicants. Applicants had six weeks to develop their proposals.

A selection committee reviewed the two submitted proposals and forwarded a recommendation to the Minneapolis city council, which approves RFPs over \$50,000. Because of concerns about the business plan, and feedback from some community groups, the city council did not accept the committee's recommendation and directed the health department to reissue the RFP. The health department worked closely with elected officials to understand their concerns and modify the RFP language in order to identify a more appropriate entity. In the second round, neither of the two original applicants wanted to apply again and the health department received only one new proposal. In January 2011, the city council approved funding for Redeemer Center for Life (RCFL) to open and operate the bike/walk center.



Post-renovation

RCFL is the non-profit partner of Redeemer Lutheran Church, a faith community that has been part of the Harrison neighborhood of north Minneapolis for over 100 years. RCFL started in 1999 in response to the identification of three primary needs: job growth, attainable housing, and youth

development. The organization applied for the CPPW funds because the bike shop could contribute to residents' health and well-being by helping people meet their basic transportation needs, offering access to physical activity opportunities, providing jobs and employment training for youth and creating opportunities for social-connectedness.

Developing the center and its components

RCFL designated a small, vacant building that it already owned to house the bike/walk center. Its location is on the far southern end of north Minneapolis, not centrally located in this community, but conveniently located along bike paths that lead into downtown Minneapolis and to trails that connect to a popular parkway. The space needed significant renovation to become operational, including new lighting, floors, walls, heating and more. While contractors renovated the building, Redeemer staff developed the coffee shop, retail space, bike repair services, and programming components of the center. To provide cash flow to pay for the renovation and purchase initial inventory, the health department developed an alternative process to its “reimbursement only” procedures. RCFL applied for regular “advance payments” by detailing their planned expenses, which were approved by health department staff. Documentation of purchases was submitted to the health department at a later date to ensure that funding was being used appropriately. Without this alternative payment process, RCFL could not have moved forward with the renovations or store opening because suppliers and contractors would not grant a sufficient line of credit to a newly established entity.

During this time, the health department’s primary roles were to oversee expenditures, ensure that the bike/walk center components matched the intent of the center, and help RCFL troubleshoot challenges. For example, while waiting for the building renovation, RCFL needed storage for the used bikes it was collecting. Through its relationships with the Public Works Department, the health department identified affordable temporary storage options.

Opening and operating Venture North

Originally, the health department intended the bike/walk center to open by May 2011. Because of the second RFP process, and challenges with the contracting process, the shop officially opened as Venture North Bike Walk and Coffee in October 2011. A community celebration and kick-off event attracted over 200 people, including Minneapolis city council members and State of Minnesota House and Senate representatives.

Venture North includes a retail store, repair services, coffee shop, and education and programming:

- **Repair Shop:** Venture North projected that most revenue would come from its repair and maintenance services. The shop offers comprehensive services such as tune ups, brake repair, and tire replacement.
- **Retail store:** Venture North’s first manager came from a traditional bike shop. He believed that a mix of new, high-end bikes and used bikes would attract both elite bikers and beginners from the neighborhood. When the expensive bikes did not sell as expected, Venture North sold them back to the vendors and shifted their focus to selling used bikes that had been refurbished by its youth mechanics. The store also sells bike and pedestrian accessories such as helmets, locks, clothing, commuter bags, and pedometers.
- **Coffee shop:** RCFL included a coffee shop component in Venture North to create a gathering place in the community; attract customers and generate stable revenue in winter, capture car and bike commuters on their way into downtown Minneapolis, and provide a training and employment opportunity for youth in the neighborhood. Originally, Venture North sought



an existing coffee business that would rent space in the store, manage and operate the coffee shop, and train youth from the neighborhood. After difficulty finding an interested and appropriate entity, RCFL decided to assume operations for the coffee shop. It bought its own coffee equipment, found a local coffee supplier, and trained Venture North staff to operate the shop. It currently sells coffee and tea drinks and healthy snacks.

- Youth Mechanics Training: To fulfill the City's youth employment requirement for Venture North funding and its own youth development goals, RCFL and the head bike mechanic developed the "All About Bikes" mechanic training for youth. This program included a 16-weeks, hands-on training to develop basic bike mechanic skills, followed by an eight-week, paid apprenticeship at Venture North or the Hub Bike Shop in south Minneapolis. In October 2011, seven high school students, most from north Minneapolis, started the training. In March 2012, the store graduated its

first cohort of five youth mechanics. Fifteen youth participated in the second training cohort, which began in summer 2012. This program has helped young people develop confidence, marketable skills in bike repair, and employment etiquette. In fact, the school principal of one youth mechanic reported that before the training, this young man was extremely shy and mostly looked at his shoes when speaking to others. As a result of his experiences at Venture North, he gained self-confidence and skills for interacting with others. In fact, he served as his school's commencement speaker in the spring of 2012. With the knowledge he gained at Venture North, he's planning to start his own small business at his college campus providing bike repair and maintenance services to other students.

- **Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM):** With additional grant funding, RCFL recruited a volunteer from Quality Bike Parts (a national bike parts supplier based in Minnesota) to incorporate concepts from STEM, a math/science curriculum, into a “build-a-bike” program. RCFL recruited fourth, sixth and eighth grade girls from a nearby school to participate in the program. For six weeks, the girls met at Venture North, where they each built and earned their own bike.
- **Educational classes:** RCFL developed a variety of educational opportunities geared toward different audiences. The goal of the classes was to provide free or low-cost opportunities for community residents to learn about important topics including the health benefits of biking and walking and active transportation skill development. Venture North management developed an initial schedule of classes open to the public that was rolled out in phases starting in the spring of 2012. Appendix 2 describes the goals of each educational opportunity.

Communications and Outreach

To advertise Venture North, RCFL worked with a local marketing firm that provided pro bono services to create a website and develop a targeted marketing and promotions plan for specific types of customers. Venture North also published ads in community newspapers and hosted the grand opening celebration. These efforts yielded approximately a dozen newspaper and blog articles as well as multiple interviews on local radio and television stations. In addition, RCFL used its CPPW funding to hire a part-time community organizer to promote Venture North to local park and recreation centers, faith-based organizations, and neighborhood groups. This position involved establishing connections with local media contacts to pitch story ideas throughout the year, coordinating community events both on-site at Venture North and at community locations like North Commons Park, creating and maintaining Venture North social media sites, and setting up meetings with potential partner organizations like the City of Lakes Loppet. As a result of these outreach and promotional efforts, Venture North generated a significant amount of media and community support including garnering over 300 Facebook fans and 122 Twitter followers as well as regular media features on three prominent television news stations. After the CPPW funding ended, RCFL discontinued this position but continues the outreach functions through Venture North and RCFL staff.

Costs for Venture North Bike Walk & Coffee

\$64,907: Salary/fringe for Redeemer Center for Life staff (general manager, programming director, senior bike mechanic, youth retail coordinators, youth workers)

\$149,659: Venture North operating expenses (renovation expenses, furniture and related supplies, rent, utilities, program-related costs and administrative costs)

\$46,138: Initial inventory of bike parts, used bikes, accessories, and food/beverage equipment and accessories

\$89,296: Contractual services including bike shop management assistance, start-up team, business retail consultant, web and marketing consultant

\$50,861: Salary/fringe for health department staff (.3 FTE)

Total: \$400,861



Outcomes and Summary

The health department and RCFL achieved their shared goal of providing north Minneapolis residents with a community-based resource for bike retail and repair services and biking and walking promotion and support. Venture North now serves as an anchor for the biking and walking community in north Minneapolis and the surrounding communities.

In 2012, Venture North sold 86 refurbished bikes and 28 new bikes (114 total). Revenue from repair and maintenance sales was unavailable. The health department's funding for Venture North ended in March 2012; however, RCFL successfully leveraged these dollars to garner additional grants that sustained various education components and the youth bike mechanic training. These grants helped keep Venture North financially solvent as retail sales and repair/maintenance revenue grow. As of December 2012—after its first full biking season—Venture North is close to breaking even and achieving financial sustainability, a significant accomplishment given that most bike shops fail within their first three years.

Starting a non-profit business venture was an atypical—and often challenging—project for the health department because of its limited experience in business development. However, the CPPW funding provided an opportunity for the health department to provide start-up costs to initiate a skeleton business, which has evolved and thus far remained solvent. These initial funds gave RCFL the security needed to undertake the challenge and risk of starting the shop in north Minneapolis. While CPPW funds were critical for Venture North's start up, it is currently managed by RCFL as a self-sustaining non-profit business. Venture North Bike Walk and Coffee will continue to expand its inventory and services to attract a larger customer base, with a focus on new bikers and women – two populations that Venture North has identified as not feeling comfortable in traditional bike shops in the city.

The health department was well-positioned to connect RCFL to other CPPW-funded biking and walking initiatives including Nice Ride Minnesota, Safe Routes to School efforts at nearby elementary schools, and the Bike.Walk.MOVE media campaign. As a result, Venture North became a key component in a network of physical activity resources available to community residents in north Minneapolis.

The importance of selecting a well-known and respected north Minneapolis entity to start the bike/walk community center has been essential to Venture North's success. RCFL's existing relationships with community members and other community entities have fostered residents' acceptance and ownership of the shop. As a trusted institution in the community, RCFL was well-positioned to modify its services and programming to reflect what community members want and can afford. Though not guaranteed, Venture North's likelihood of sustainability is stronger because of RCFL's longstanding, mission-driven commitment to supporting young people and improving the quality of life in north Minneapolis.

Bike.Walk.MOVE Campaign



Background

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, community-wide campaigns—combined with environmental changes such as bike trails—are effective in increasing levels of physical activity.

As part of its comprehensive, multi-strategy approach to increase biking and walking in north Minneapolis, the health department directed its CPPW funds for a media and outreach campaign that would serve as a unifying element for its significant investment in north Minneapolis, including the Nice Ride expansion, wayfinding signs, Venture North, and Safe Routes to School activities underway at Minneapolis Public Schools.

The campaign, called Bike.Walk.MOVE, was designed to raise residents' awareness of the investments being made to improve the biking and walking infrastructure in north Minneapolis and to encourage people to shift toward non-motorized transportation.

Project Description

To conduct the campaign, the health department partnered with Bike Walk Twin Cities, a program of Transit for Livable Communities (TLC), a Twin Cities organization that had its own plans to conduct a media campaign in two Minneapolis neighborhoods. The health department's CPPW funds provided an opportunity to tailor and implement TLC's campaign in north Minneapolis and to expand TLC's evaluation efforts to measure the impact of the department's projects (wayfinding signs, Nice Ride, Venture North) on residents' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to biking and walking.

The three main components of the campaign included:

- Message development
- Campaign implementation
- Evaluation

To implement these components, TLC and the health department convened a project team that included their staff, a contracted research and evaluation team, and a community-based agency to conduct community outreach in north Minneapolis to develop the campaign and implement some of its components.

Message development

Results from TLC's initial research indicated that themes related to freedom and cost savings resonated with the target audience. Using these themes, the advertising agency drafted several concepts, slogans and ads. The ad agency conducted three focus groups with north Minneapolis residents (who were recruited by a community-based organization) to test the concepts and refine campaign elements. Participants favored four campaign concepts:

1. I choose.
2. De-bunking stereotypes.
3. Health messages.
4. Economic costs.

Based on feedback from these groups, the project team developed ads based on all four themes but later pulled the ad addressing stereotypes because they were negatively received in the community. To promote the norm that North Side residents engage in active transportation and to avoid residents feeling that they were being subjected to another generic campaign, the advertising agency used photos of recognizable North Side residents and destinations rather than stock photographs of people and places.

Campaign implementation

The project team developed a five-month campaign (June through October 2011) in eight north

Minneapolis neighborhoods. The campaign included the following elements:

- **Paid advertising:** With the assistance of a public relations firm, Bike.Walk.MOVE purchased advertising space in community newspapers and cultural-specific newspapers such as Hmong Times and La Prensa. Between July and September, the campaign placed ads on buses and bus shelters where walkers, bus riders, bicyclists and people in cars would see the messages. It also purchased radio ads that ran during the Twin Cities' leading traffic-update station, KBEM. These ads were designed to remind commuters who were gridlocked in traffic about the benefits of biking and walking.
- **Web site:** www.bikewalkmove.org was created as the single resource for information to help someone get started or keep biking and walking more. The site included maps, tips, links to other resources, 10 engaging stories and updates, and much more. The number of unique visits ranged from 538 in July to 2,729 in September.
- **Materials:** To support the campaign's messages, the advertising agency created T-shirts and a Bike.Walk.MOVE booklet with tips, maps, resources and other helpful information for bicyclists. It also included coupons to local businesses to encourage residents to bike to featured destinations; however, the ad team struggled to find businesses to include in the coupon book because of the low retail density of north Minneapolis and because several businesses were closed after the tornado.



- **Earned media:** The advertising agency used a public relations consultant to pursue social media channels and unpaid media attention around biking and walking. These efforts yielded a live interview on a local radio show and a few newspaper articles about the campaign and biking and walking in general. In addition, the health department leveraged the Bike.Walk.MOVE campaign to plan the Venture North kickoff event and corresponding media attention in October 2011. Nine stories in major newspapers, coverage on three major television networks, and an interview on public radio resulted from the public relations activities.
- **Social media:** The ad agency created Bike.Walk.MOVE Facebook and Twitter accounts and regularly posted information to connect people to biking and walking stories, facts, and resources. In 2012, these efforts generated 29 Twitter mentions, two Facebook posts and 111 followers.
- **Community outreach:** In addition to these media-related activities, the health department contracted with a community-based agency for grassroots outreach. The agency recruited 10 North Side residents to serve as ambassadors for biking and walking at community events and within their social networks. These ambassadors were not paid and most did few outreach activities. The community-based agency also participated in existing community gatherings such as farmers markets and initiated their own events. For example, the agency planned a community bike ride for the Juneteenth celebration and added bike repair services and walking activities to the existing North Side Glide Ride. The goals of these events were to bring people together to celebrate the north Minneapolis neighborhoods, their residents and the area's new biking amenities (bike lanes and Nice Ride). At these events, the ambassadors, agency, health department, and TLC staff shared Bike.Walk.MOVE materials and talked with people about trying biking and walking or increasing how often they already do it.

Evaluation

The health department and TLC designed a comprehensive evaluation to measure the results of the outreach and communications campaign on attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors related to biking and walking. It included baseline and follow-up data collection through in-person interview surveys designed to measure:

- Demographics: age, race/ethnicity, income, age, education, gender.
- Biking, walking, and driving behaviors and attitudes.
- Awareness of new CPPW-funded projects (e.g., Nice Ride) and TLC infrastructure projects such as the new bike lanes in north Minneapolis.
- Campaign awareness (follow-up data collection).

Baseline data collection: The evaluators intended to collect baseline data one month prior to the campaign's launch in May 2011 one month prior to the campaign's launch, however, many factors challenged this timing. First, the late May tornado postponed data collection until June and then coincided with the campaign launch. The survey samples were also redrawn to avoid the blocks hardest hit by the tornado. Second, the evaluation firm tried to hire and train North Side residents to conduct the surveys, but it was difficult to retain them because of the weather (high temperatures and rain) and their concerns for personal safety. Finally, the random sample design became unmanageable because the surveyors travelled by walking or biking and the distances between selected homes were too far. Despite these challenges, surveyors conducted 205 baseline surveys by early August.

More than half of the sample (57 percent, n=117) reported "walking for exercise or relaxation" and 44

percent reported they "walked to destinations two or more days a week" during the summer of 2010.

Baseline data showed that 20 percent of the sample reported having physical issues that made it impossible for them to ever ride a bike. Most physically able respondents, 71 percent (n=108), reported they "rode a bicycle in the past year." Of those who rode a bike in the last year, 55 percent reported "riding frequently" or "sometimes" and 37 percent reported "riding rarely." Most people who biked did so for recreational versus transportation purposes. In fact, among the respondents who reported they "rode a bike in the past year," almost half (48.1 percent) said they "never rode a bicycle to get to work, school, stores, or other destinations" during the summer of 2010. Twenty-two percent said they "rode a bicycle to destinations two or more days a week."

Access to a good, working bike is a major barrier for many North Side residents. Of those who did not ride a bicycle in the past year, 66 percent reported they "did not have a bicycle in good working condition available for use" and 79 percent reported that they "did not know of a place to buy a bicycle." For most respondents, concerns about safety or distance were not barriers to biking and walking. The proportion of respondents who "agreed/strongly agreed" that there are "stores within easy walking distance from my home" and "stores within easy biking distance from my home," were 75 percent and 88 percent, respectively.

Follow up data collection: Follow-up surveys were conducted from mid-October through November 2011, with a focus on surveying baseline respondents. Surveyors collected data from 143 post-campaign respondents, including 80 pre-survey respondents. Because of challenges posed by the distance between selected respondents, the evaluation team transitioned

2011 Campaign Timeline

March-April

- Development and pilot testing of the campaign's creative look and key messages

May

- Community ambassadors recruited and trained
- Tornado Mid-June and July
- Door-to-door baseline data collection
- Organized two bike rides
- Presence at art crawl
- Website launched

August

- Campaign presence at three community events

September

- Campaign presence at Harvest Festival

October-November

- Venture North grand opening event
- Door-to-door follow-up data collection

to a more time-efficient cluster sample. As shown in Table 2, results indicated high recognition of the campaign.

Table 2: Bike.Walk.MOVE Recognition

Campaign Recognition	% of respondents (n=143)
Recognized Bike.Walk.MOVE campaign	57%
Recognized "I Choose" slogan	
Recalled seeing campaign messages in:	
Bus shelters	27%
Buses	25%
Newspapers	15%
Radio ads	11%
T-shirts	8%

The survey results also showed that respondents became more aware of biking and walking amenities:

- Increase in Nice Ride awareness from 66 percent to 91 percent of respondents
- Increase in awareness of wayfinding signs from 56 percent to 75 percent of respondents

Despite the high awareness of the campaign and the new biking and walking amenities in the community, the data showed no increase in the awareness of a place to buy a bike nor any increases in biking and walking behaviors,

Summary

The health department included the Bike.Walk. MOVE campaign in its comprehensive approach to biking and walking in Minneapolis to influence social norms related to active transportation and to increase awareness of biking/walking amenities in north Minneapolis. Unlike the other elements of the comprehensive approach (Nice Ride, wayfinding signs, etc.), the health department included a robust evaluation of the campaign, which showed that the campaign achieved high visibility in the community and increased residents' awareness of Nice Ride and bike signs, but did not affect biking and walking behaviors.

These results are not surprising. The campaign's high visibility can be attributed to its presence at most of the community's biggest events and its strategic ad placement at bus shelters and buses. The campaign's inability to change biking and walking behaviors is likely related to the short duration of the campaign and ill-timing between the availability of new biking amenities (e.g., Venture North and some bike trails), survey data collection, and the campaign's launch. The tornado delayed the baseline data collection such that the campaign had already launched when surveyors began conducting the in-person interviews. Additionally, the bike lanes and Venture North opened much later than expected giving residents almost no time to learn about and experience these features before follow-up data collection began in early October. While it would have been better to delay the campaign's launch or extend its implementation, the health department was tied to the short timeline of the CPPW grant that funded the campaign.

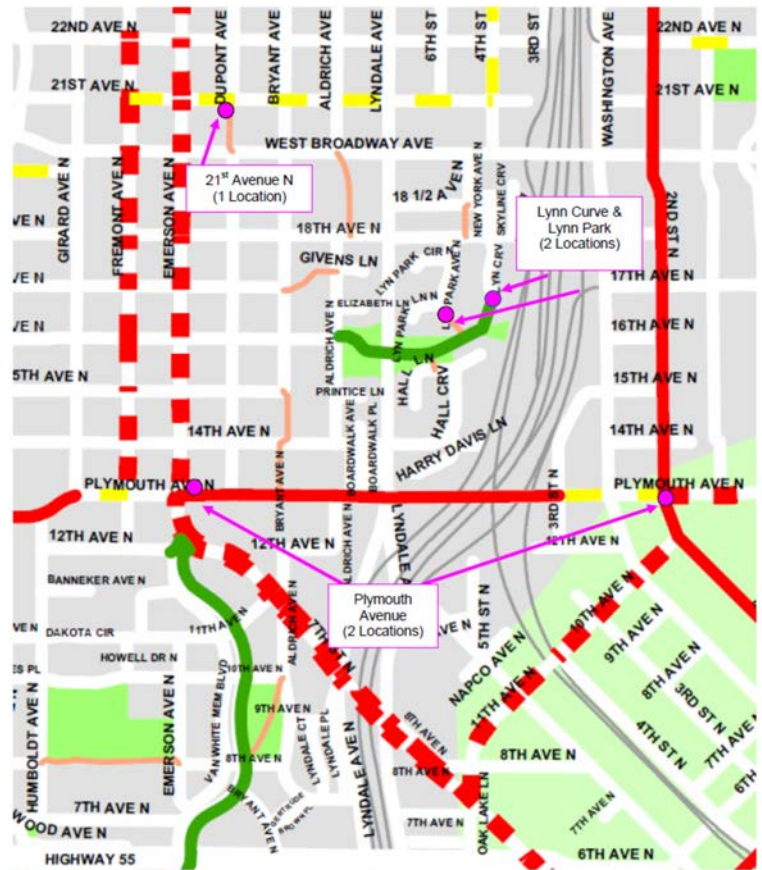
In addition to timing, the campaign may have been targeted too broadly. Throughout the development of this campaign, messages were targeted to an audience based on geography (i.e., north Minneapolis), but the survey results showed that this broad scope may not be strategic as 20 percent of respondents reported health conditions that prevented them from biking and walking and most people who biked did so for recreation instead of transportation purposes. A more defined target audience (for example, people who indicate readiness to change their transportation behavior) may result in even more effective campaign messaging and impact.

In summary, the campaign laid the groundwork for changing social norms around biking/walking in an area of the city where residents have not traditionally been highly involved in these activities. Heightening awareness in the North Side community is a first step toward creating more enduring social change. As in any public health social marketing campaign, repetition of messages and the consistent provision of community-involvement opportunities must be sustained for age-old norms to change.

Appendix 1

Near North Neighborhood Signage Plan

Bicycle and Pedestrian Signs in the Near North Neighborhood



Legend

- Solid Red = Existing On-Street Bike Lane
- Solid Green = Existing Off-Street Bike Path
- Solid Peach = Existing Pedestrian Connection
- Dashed Red = Funded On-Street Bike or Shared Lane
- Dashed Yellow = Planned Bikeway

All street name signs are 2-sided. All way finding signs and pedestrians permitted signs are 1-sided.

Plymouth Avenue (2 Locations)

Location 1 Nearest Intersection: N Plymouth Avenue & N 2nd Street

Place 3 signs at this intersection.

a) Place way finding sign 1a on northeast corner facing westbound bicyclists on existing No Parking signpost
Way Finding Sign 1a:



b) Place way finding sign 1b on southwest corner facing eastbound bicyclists on existing Bus Stop signpost
Way Finding Sign 1b:



c) Place way finding sign 1b on northwest corner facing southbound bicyclists on a new signpost
Way Finding Sign 1c:



Location 2 Nearest Intersection: N Plymouth Avenue & N Emerson Avenue
Place 1 sign at this intersection.

a) Place way finding sign 2a on northeast corner facing westbound bicyclists on existing Bus Stop signpost
Way Finding Sign 2a:



Lynn Curve & Lynn Park (2 Locations)

Location 1 Nearest Intersection: N 18111 Avenue & N Lynn Curve Ave
Go south on Lynn Curve Avenue until it dead ends. There is an existing bent sign post with 2 signs saying "Except Authorized Vehicles," and "No Parking in Front of Walkway." Remove the "Except Authorized Vehicles" sign and replace with the Pedestrians Permitted sign. Straighten sign post if possible.



Pedestrians Permitted Sign.

Location 2 Nearest Intersection: N 18111

Avenue & N Lynn Park Ave
Go south on Lynn Park Avenue until it dead ends. Place Pedestrians Permitted sign on a new signpost facing southbound pedestrians.
Pedestrians Permitted Sign.



21st Avenue N (1 Location) Nearest

Intersection: N 21st Ave & N Dupont Ave

Place Pedestrians Permitted sign on a new sign post on the southwest corner in the boulevard facing southbound pedestrians. Pedestrians Permitted Sign.

Venture North Bike Education Plan

The proposed mechanics-oriented education plan will be periodically assessed and new classes and events will be added as more volunteers become available. Other classes for different demographics will arise as well to serve the needs of the entire neighborhood.

Class: Recurring, educational program (usually with more than one session); usually for a fee.

Event: One-time/one-off demonstrations or events to show skills/products or bring people in to the shop; free.

Name Type Schedule Cost	Description	Outcomes/Measures	Staff
<p>Basic Maintenance - Class</p> <p>Monthly - 3rd Thursday & Friday back-to-back nights from 6-9PM</p> <p>8 bikes + 8 students</p> <p>70 dollars per student</p> <p>Venture North Classroom</p>	<p>This class covers all the basics. You'll learn how to adjust shifting, adjust brakes, true wheels, adjust bearings and more! We'll have the tools in our hands going over all aspects of the basic tune-up. The classes are limited to 8 so you can receive individual attention. At the end of the class you'll be able to show off your new handy skills! You'll work on your own bike too, so it'll be ready to roll when spring has sprung!</p>	<p>Outcomes will be measured in two ways. As professor of the class, I'll be continually assessing the progress of those in the class to make sure they are performing the tasks up to my standards. At the end of the class I'll inspect each student's progress and ensure that all bikes are tuned up and safe to ride.</p> <p>For our feedback we'll be asking participants to take a short survey as to the effectiveness of the class and areas in which we can improve.</p>	<p>Casey Pavek – Head Mechanic</p>
<p>Family Bike Repair</p> <p>Class - Monthly</p> <p>2nd Saturday, 1-3PM</p> <p>8 kids' bikes + 16 people</p> <p>30 dollars per family, limit one bike per two people, guardian required.</p> <p>Venture North Classroom</p>	<p>This class will cover the basics of how to tune up a single-speed coaster-brake kids' bike. These youth bikes are everywhere; let's get them rolling for the kids! We'll talk about tubes and tires, and good maintenance habits. After this class you'll be able to adjust one-piece bottom brackets, brakes, headset and hubs. We may even have time for a chain install. Each child must have an adult companion to help them with their bikes!</p>	<p>Outcomes for this class will be measured by satisfaction surveys and an inspection of all work completed at the end of class to ensure safety.</p>	<p>Casey with paid mechanic interns</p>
<p>Couples' Night Maintenance</p> <p>Class - Monthly</p> <p>2nd Friday, 6-9PM</p> <p>8 bikes + 16 people - 40 dollars per couple</p> <p>Venture North Classroom</p>	<p>Join us for this is a doubles-style basic maintenance class on a Friday night with sparkling juice and cheese.</p>	<p>Outcomes will be measured in two ways. As professor of the class, I'll be continually assessing the progress of those in the class to make sure they are performing the tasks up to my standards. At the end of the class I'll inspect each student's progress and ensure that all bikes are tuned up and safe to ride. For our feedback we'll be asking participants to take a short survey as to the effectiveness of the class and areas in which we can improve.</p>	<p>Casey Pavek – Head Mechanic</p>

Name Type Schedule Cost	Description	Outcomes/Measures	Staff
<p>Explore Theo! Kids' Ride</p> <p>Event</p> <p>Spring!</p> <p>No pre-registration required</p> <p>Free</p> <p>Meet at Venture North, ride to Theodore Wirth Park</p>	<p>Safety inspections of bikes and a fun ride to explore Theo Wirth Park with some hiking and a snack.</p>	<p>Outcomes will be assessed by number of participants able to ride and have fun!</p>	<p>Volunteers with very basic mechanic skills and some knowledge of the park and nature.</p>
<p>Fix-a-Flat Fridays</p> <p>Event -</p> <p>Every Friday at 5PM</p> <p>Free!</p> <p>Venture North Service Area</p>	<p>Our expert staff and Interns will guide you step by step through the process so you can truly be self-sufficient out on the trail. All ages are welcome in this fun and informative demo. Never even tried to fix a flat? No problem! We are happy to teach folks of all backgrounds and experience level.</p>	<p>The participants will perform the demo along with the instructor with their own wheel. They'll learn how to remove the tube, inspect for various problems, reinstall and inflate. Outcomes will be measured in survey form at the end to assess the effectiveness of the instructor and the information taught.</p>	<p>Staff interns teaching this class.</p>



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